



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Comment Sought on Katmai Hunting Environmental Assessment

The National Park Service has prepared an environmental assessment analyzing three alternatives for managing guided hunting services in Katmai National Preserve.

The assessment is open for public comment for 30 days through July 23, 2012.

Guided hunting has occurred in the preserve since before its establishment as a national preserve in 1980. The proposed action would continue guided hunter concession contracts, with an expectation of issuing 10-year contracts beginning with the Fall 2013 hunt.

The preferred alternative proposes revisions to the existing guide area boundaries and annual client limits for each of two guide contracts. The NPS believes the revised boundaries provide a more equitable distribution of business opportunities and a reasonable apportionment of clients to guide area resources, while maintaining other purposes and values for which the area was established.

Guided hunting services are considered to be an appropriate and necessary means to provide hunting opportunities for both Alaska resident and non-resident hunters within national preserves. Alaska state law requires non-resident brown bear hunters to be either accompanied by a licensed guide or a close relative over 19 years old who is an Alaska resident; foreign citizens must have a licensed guide to hunt any big game species.

Depending on the outcome of the environmental assessment, the NPS intends to issue a new prospectus later this year.

Public scoping for this project began in May 2011. Based on public comments, the NPS decided to prepare a more detailed environmental assessment.

In addition to the preferred alternative, the assessment proposes a no-action alternative which would let the hunting concession contracts expire in December 2012 and not be renewed.

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The assessment also proposes a status quo action alternative which would re-bid the contracts under the existing guide area boundaries and client limits. Under both action alternatives, the total number of clients would be limited to 28.

The environmental assessment is posted on the National Park Service's planning web site, <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/>. The document may be downloaded from there, and comments may be sent through a link on the same site. Paper copies of the plan may be requested from Katmai National Park, P.O. Box 7, King Salmon, AK 99613, or by phone from (907) 246-3305. Written comments on the plan may be sent to the same mail address by July 23, 2012.